

# The INFORMANT

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department

## Hot Spots shift to impact East Zone

**H**ot Spots just got hotter in the East Patrol Division.

For the last several years, officers, detectives and sergeants not in field assignments have had to work six extra field shifts annually in geographic areas with high concentrations of violent crime. This has provided 14,000 hours each year of additional police coverage on weekends, when crime in Hot Spots peaks.

The problem was, those officers didn't really know what to do, said Major Joseph McHale, commander of the East Patrol Division.

"When people are showing up to roll call, it's much easier when they have specific direction," he said.

Beginning the first weekend in April, they will. Everyone will be working out of the East Patrol Division in one of three groups: violent offenders, probation and parolees / Shot Spotter follow-up, and community clean-up and interaction.

"We separated them like that because people have different skillsets," Major McHale said. "Some are very comfortable going out and finding bad guys. Others are better at speaking with the community."

East Patrol was chosen for all Hot Spot work based on violent crime intelligence information, Major McHale said.

"But we'll go where the intelligence takes us," he said. "If we have people causing problems in East Zone, but they live in South or North Zone, we're going to go get them."

While the Violent Crimes Enforcement Division already seeks out violent offenders who have been identified as central to criminal networks, Major McHale said they only concentrate on one criminal group per quarter. Adding the Hot Spot officers allows police to search for many more offenders. According to the Special Order announcing the changes, officers who choose this assignment will locate and apprehend target subjects with outstanding warrants or subjects whom investigative elements are seeking.

Officers in the probation, parole and Shot Spotter group will do a few different things. Some will be given information on subjects on probation or parole and be instructed to conduct residence checks on them. Others will go to locations where gunshots have



**Officers conducted a residence check in East Patrol during the first revamped Hot Spots shift.**

been reported through Shot Spotter technology (but not usually by residents), gather information and encourage people to report gunfire.

"We want to make the neighborhood feel safer," Major McHale said. "We're saying, 'We know there's gunfire here, and we're doing something about it.'"

The third Hot Spot assignment group, community clean-up and interaction, already is full. Officers sign up through an online system for three shifts during the first and second halves of the year, respectively. The community group will work during the day time and can wear casual attire, which Major McHale admits may have contributed to its popularity.

This group will, "Participate in the beautification of public and directed spaces, support increased employment opportunities and create positive interactions with youth and community members in the Hot Spot areas," according to the Special Order.

"There are a lot of events and clean-ups and things we've found the community has wanted help with, but we don't have the manpower to do it," McHale said.

"And with the Chief coming out so publicly with the need for beautification to reduce crime in these areas, we saw a huge opportunity."

Newly promoted Captain Ryan Mills will oversee the revamped Hot Spot program – coordinating information packets on target offenders, probationers and parolees, Shot Spotter locations and community events. Every Monday, he will gather results from officers' Hot Spot work, such as who was arrested, intelligence gathered, community events attended and more. Then he'll use that – along with intelligence and requests from investigative units as well as the community – to prepare information packets for the next weekend of Hot Spot assignments.

"Now we'll be tracking things in a meaningful way," Major McHale said.

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# Quality Control Unit seeks improvement

A practice common among large businesses is coming to KCPD, and the department might be the first major law enforcement agency in the U.S. to adopt it.

The new Quality Control Unit formally starts at the beginning of April, although the work has been ongoing for more than a year now. The main goal of the Unit, said Captain Sean Hutcheson, is to look at people and procedures to determine what is being done right, what inefficiencies exist and where improvement is needed.

“That takes courage,” Captain Hutcheson said. “I hope people are willing to take an honest look at themselves. We have to be willing to change.”

The Quality Control Unit had its beginnings in March 2015 when Investigations Bureau Commander, Deputy Chief Cheryl Rose, wanted to improve the case files KCPD was submitting to prosecutors. She implemented a Quality Assurance Committee with investigative personnel. The more they worked, the more ideas they come up with for improvement – so much so that a dedicated unit needed to be formed. Captain Hutcheson was assigned QC duties full-time in October 2015. This month, Sergeant Shelly Gaddis joined him as part of the new Unit.

One of the first items identified that could use some improvement was the first piece of

any case file: patrol officers’ incident reports. To achieve that, Hutcheson and Gaddis now teach effective report writing at in-service and are meeting individually with officers and sergeants to brush up on their skills. Everyone has been very receptive so far, Sergeant Gaddis said.

Captain Hutcheson and Sergeant Gaddis are reviewing 30,000 cases from 2015 to determine whether follow-up is needed. In most cases, it’s not. Those are sent back to patrol sergeants to close out. A few, however, have been referred to detectives for additional work.

Ideas the QA committee and Unit have come up with along the way will lead to policy changes that will “change the culture of our police department,” Captain Hutcheson said.

He gave this ex-

ample: An officer discovers a stolen vehicle being driven by the suspect. The suspect flees from police and wrecks. Police arrest him, find out he’s a convicted felon in possession of a firearm, and there are drugs in the car. As it is now, the officer on scene must contact property crimes detectives for the stolen car, traffic investigators for the eluding and crash, the Violent Crimes Administrative Squad for the firearm and the Narcotics and Vice Division for the drugs. Then each of those investigating elements would submit a separate case to prosecutors.

The QC group is proposing a hierarchy concept in which the whole case will be assigned to one detective in the investigative unit that corresponds to the highest level of offense. In the above example, the highest-level offense is the stolen vehicle. So the property crimes detective would present all charges to the prosecutor, from the drugs to the gun.

“It ensures nothing falls through the cracks,” Captain Hutcheson said. “And if a prosecutor is seeing one guy with four charges at once, instead of seeing one guy with one charge four separate times that could come in weeks apart, that’s going to look like the more serious case that it is.”

Hutcheson and Gaddis have been unable to find any other police department with a quality control program (outside of crime labs, which usually is an accreditation requirement). Many departments nationwide have heard about what KCPD is doing, however, and have been in contact with Hutcheson and Gaddis in hopes of starting their own such QC Unit.

Hutcheson and Gaddis would like to see the unit grow and eventually encompass other department bureaus. With their current manpower, the focus primarily is on Investigations and Patrol. Hutcheson and Gaddis encouraged anyone with ideas on how to improve processes in those areas and/or case management to contact them by e-mailing [qualitycontrol@kcpd.org](mailto:qualitycontrol@kcpd.org).

“I don’t want to hear the term, ‘best practice,’ because we can always have a better one,” Sergeant Gaddis said.

**“I hope people are willing to take an honest look at themselves. We have to be willing to change.”**

**- Captain Sean Hutcheson  
Quality Control Unit**

## Tactical Unit marks 50-year anniversary



As reported in the January 2016 Informant newsletter, the Tactical Support Unit has now been a part of the Kansas City Missouri Police Department for 50 years, making it one of KCPD’s oldest, continuously serving, specialized units.

Members of the current Unit marked the occasion by taking group photos this month. Three teams with two squads each presently comprise the Tactical Support Unit.





## Bomb & Arson K9 retires

**A**ccelerant Detection Canine Derin of the Bomb and Arson Unit retired March 23. Derin is 8 years old, an ATF-certified canine and has been with KCPD since 2009. Newly promoted Sergeant Mike Luster is her handler. The ATF only certifies accelerant-detecting dogs up until age 9.

She will spend her retirement as the Luster family pet.

"She has been a great partner and hard worker," Sgt. Luster said. "I will miss bringing her to work every day, and she will probably miss it too."

## KCPD members help find those who wander

**W**ith their own time and money, KCPD members have worked to help residents prone to wandering because of conditions like autism and Alzheimer's.

### Care Trak, thanks to Communications Unit

Members of the Communications Unit raised enough money to purchase a device that helps police find an autistic teen when he wanders off. KCPD officers gave the device to the teen and his mother at the end of January.

Dispatcher Marsha Bradley led the fund-raising effort to buy a Care Trak bracelet for 14-year-old Warren. Bradley knew Warren frequently wanders from home, and it typically takes multiple officers from three different patrol divisions to locate him. So she asked the other dispatchers and call-takers to contribute to a fund that would purchase a Care Trak bracelet for Warren.

Care Trak is a body-worn tracking device that aids law enforcement in locating children and adults who are prone to wander because of conditions like autism, Down syndrome, dementia and Alzheimer's. Each of KCPD's six patrol division stations has a Care Trak locating device and officers trained to use it. (More information about KCPD's Care Trak program was in the [August 2014 Informant](#).) Since Warren was presented with the device, he has eloped six more times, and police have used the Care Trak system to locate him safely. Far fewer resources were needed to find him.

By putting money in a jar in their office, the members of the Communications Unit were able to raise \$350 to purchase the tracking device and a year's worth of batteries and bands to go with it.

KCPD is continuing to search for ways to raise money for Care Trak tracking devices for families who need them but can't afford them. Anyone interested in making a donation can e-mail [caretrak@kcpd.org](mailto:caretrak@kcpd.org).

### There's an app for that

Sergeant Garrik Haynes used his own time to create an application to help first responders find people who are likely to elope because of conditions like autism and dementia. The application is free and available online at [chasethevillage.com](http://chasethevillage.com) or on Android devices. (Work is



**Sergeant Garrik Haynes and nurse Shelley Morphey of Children's Mercy Hospital helped the Pham family get enrolled in the Chase the Village app Haynes created to help first responders locate people who elope, like their autistic son.**

underway for it to be on Apple devices, as well.) Sergeant Haynes developed it with input from Captain Brad Deichler, who is himself the father of an autistic son who elopes.

Captain Deichler said he hopes lots of people take advantage of the application Sergeant Haynes created.

"He has put a lot of time in on this, and we are very excited about what this will mean to a variety of special-needs communities, in particular autism, Down Syndrome, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and dementia," Captain Deichler said.

The idea behind the project is to alert a network of people should a person with a cognitive challenge wander off. The user of the app can send an alert to a pre-determined group of people to help locate and safely return the individual home.

The application also has detailed descriptive information about the person, along with contact information, and any other pertinent details the user cares to include. There's an intuitive mapping solution included in the app that helps searchers determine how far the person may have wandered. It also identifies any areas that may create a danger for the eloper, such as

a pool, overpass, or high-traffic area.

"This reduces the wait time of a first responder having to first go to the residence before any search can begin, along with already knowing what locations are flagged as concerns for the safety of the person, as indicated on the map," Sergeant Haynes said.

Captain Deichler said it helps police create an appropriate response, reduces risk of injury or a negative contact, and will help put families and caretakers at ease when considering calling for assistance.

QR code (a square bar code that can be scanned with a smartphone to link to more information) stickers also complement the app. They can be put on cars or at homes and will embed the same information that's in the app. First responders can scan the sticker and get the information they need to start searching immediately.

KCPD members are going to the homes of interested families that have a member who has a history of eloping or is at high risk to get them signed up and to deliver the QR code stickers. There is an initial period of free use, and then a small fee afterward to pay for server usage. Captain Deichler is working to get grants or other funding to cover those costs.

## Upcoming Events

March 23  
Promotion Ceremony

March 29  
Award Ceremony

April 11-13  
IACP PIO Conference

April 12  
Board of Police  
Commissioners Meeting

April 16  
Tip-A-Cop

April 21  
Crime Stoppers Breakfast  
25-Year Ring Ceremony

April 28  
KCPD Open House

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## Officially Speaking

### Awards

#### ***Meritorious Service Award***

Sergeant Howard Periman  
Sergeant Anthony White  
Officer Michael Allen  
Officer Travis Corum  
Officer David Lantz  
Detective Todd Dolato

#### ***Certificate of Commendation***

Officer Scott Chambers  
Officer Troy Thomas

### 25-Year Rings

Forensic Spec. Sandra Ambler  
Admin. Assist. Tracey Bolton  
Exec. Director Pearl Fain  
Comp. Serv. Spec. Anita Gee  
Admin. Assist. Marnica McMillon  
Admin. Assist. Carita Smith

### Retirements

Major Richard Lockhart  
Sergeant Shelly Volker  
Master Detective Ronald Orr  
Officer Beau Johnson  
Officer Jason Martin

### Obituaries

Retired Major Ronald Robinette  
Retired Sergeant Homer Degges  
Retired Officer Michael Medina

The mission of the  
Kansas City Missouri  
Police Department  
is to protect and serve  
with professionalism,  
honor and integrity.